

Eclectical Chiliasm;

OR, A

DISCOURSE

Concerning the

State of THINGS

FROM THE

Beginning of the *MILLENNIUM*

To the end of the *WORLD.*

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TO

Sir *Thomas Barnardidiston Baronet*

THIS Discourse
is humbly De-
dicated by

T. F.

TO

36000

TO THE
READER.

I Have here attempted an Exposition of the Prophetick Visions, contained in the Twentieth and One and Twentieth Chapters of the Revelation. A Book which on pretence of its Mysteriousness is too much neglected. This as well as the rest of the Bible was undoubtedly Written for our Learning; and to encourage our Industry and Study, a Blessing is promised to them that Read, and Hear, and Keep the Words of this Prophecy, and the things which are Written therein, Chap. 1. 3. which supposeth that the Knowledge

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ledge of these Mysteries is attainable. I am far from pretending to understand all the Visions of this Obscure and Mysterious Book. Nay, I dare not boast of an intimate and thorough Acquaintance with those I have undertaken to explain. Yet I hope I am not a perfect Stranger to them, nor wholly mistaken in the meaning of any One Vision. I know they are differently interpreted by the Learned Hammond, Grotius, and other Modern Expositors. But their way of interpreting has been solidly evinced to be none of the best, by the Learned Author of the Mystery of Godliness, so that my hopes are not much shaken with the Authority of these great Men. As to what concerns the Subject of the following Discourse, the Millennium is by them made to begin at Constantine, which is sufficiently

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ciently confuted by the State of things from that Epocha to the end of the Thousand Years. And consequently all Interpretations pursuant to that Hypothesis fall to the ground. Besides, how unsatisfactory is their Exposition of Gog and Magog, and what little affinity between the Vision and the Event that is applied to it? For Gog and Magog come from the Four Quarters of the Earth, and perish in their attempt against the Camp of the Saints and the beloved City. But the Turks came only from the North Parts, succeeded in their Enterprize against the Christians, took Constantinople, and have been in Possession of it very near Two Hundred and Fifty Years. But I decline this inviolous Argument, and for the Readers better satisfaction shall

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To the Reader.
acquaint him with the grounds on which
I proceed.

The Hypothesis to which my Interpretation is framed, is that of the Learned Mr. Mede, which has been fully vindicated by Dr. Hen. More in his Book even now mentioned. The Visions I dispose agreeably to the Order of Time in which they are fulfilled. And having framed my Exposition according to the most obvious sense of the words, I consider whether the supposed Event hath been foretold by any Prophetick Writer. And upon Enquiry I find a most wonderful agreement between these Visions, and several Prophecies in the Old Testament. And if any of them seem to relate to things already past, and to have received their accomplishment, this doth not hinder the

To the Reader.

the accommodation of them to the Millennial Reign; For the same Prophecy may very well respect different and far distant events, of which several Instances might be given. But I am perswaded most of these Prophecies were never yet fulfill'd, particularly those concerning the peaceable State of Christ's Kingdom, the Return and Incorporation of the Twelve Tribes, the Army of Gog, and that we are yet to expect the Accomplishment of them in the last Times of the World. But I am not much concerned what become of this Opinion.

For if this support from the Predictions of the Prophets fail, the whole Fabrick of my Exposition will stand unshaken, being grounded upon the manifest

To the Reader.

fest meaning of the Visions, confirmed
and strengthened by express Texts of
the New Testament and very pro-
bable Reasons.

Eclectical

Eclectical Chiliasm;

O R,

*A Discourse concerning the State of
Things from the Beginning of the
Millennium to the end of the
World.*

The Introduction.

TH E most Judicious Expositor of the Revelation is the eminent-
ly Learned Mr. *Joseph Mede* of Pious Memory, to whose La-
bours next to Divine Assistance, the slender knowledge I have in Prophetick My-
steries is chiefly owing. His Method of interpreting the Apocalyptick Visions is grounded on his Scheme of Synchronisms, that most happy discovery and only safe Rule

Rule of Interpretation ; " and must be
" acknowledged to be the most natural
" and unconstrained , most agreeable to
" the style of the Prophets, and likewise
" to History and Event. His large Com-
mentary on the Apocalypse ends with
Ch. 14. On the rest he has only publi-
shed some short Specimens or Essays, in-
tending as the Writer of his Life tells
us, to go over them again, and then to
perfect his thoughts, and as fully to in-
large himself upon them as he had done
upon the foregoing Chapters. Besides,
his Essay on Ch. 20. &c. contains some
peculiar Sentiments, which even among
his greatest Friends and Admirers have
not found equal acceptance with the rest
of his elaborate Commentary. The de-
fence of these Notions is very pleasing
and surprizing. How learnedly does he
expound the Prophecy of St. Peter con-
cerning the Day of Christ's second com-
ing, in favour of his Opinion of the Con-
flagration and Renovation of the World ?
His conceit of the great Day of Judg-
ment and of the Reign of the Saints on
Earth is not without some fair probabi-
lities. How ingenious is his Conjecture of

Gog

Gog and Magog? And there is an agreeable Beauty of thought in his distinction of the state of the New *Jerusalem*, and the state of the Nations which shall walk in the light thereof. And yet I do not find that he hath made many Proselytes to his persuasion concerning these Points. As touching the Visions relating to these Mysteries they are in my opinion capable of a more satisfactory Exposition, which is here attemped. I shall discourse them in the same order they are accomplished.

To the Millennial state belong,

First, The binding and confinement of Satan.

Secondly, The Resurrection and Reign of the Saints.

Thirdly, The new Heavens and the new Earth.

Fourthly, The new *Jerusalem*.

The thousand years expired' *Gog and Magog* invade the Camp of the Saints.

And to this Expedition succeeds, the general Judgment and End of the World.

Chap.

C H A P. I.

Of Satan's Confinement.

THE preparation to the Millennial happiness is the binding the Devil and shutting him up in the bottomless pit. ch. 20. 1, 2, 3. I saw an Angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great Chain in his Hand. And he laid hold on the Dragon that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the Nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled. All which signifies no more than the close restraint of the Devil, and the retrenchment of that liberty which hitherto for wise ends God is pleased to indulge him. Now he is permitted to go to and fro in the Earth and to walk up and down in it, Job 1. 7. to practise his Infernal devios and arts of deceit. But then he shall be con-

confined to the aery Regions his proper Territories; or his walk on the Earth shall be limited to a narrower compass, viz., the nations not converted to the Faith of Christ. It is said ver. 7. 8. that *the Devil being loosed out of Prison, goes to deceive the nations in the four quarters of the Earth, and to gather them together to Battel,* which seems to imply, that the Heathen nations during the term of his confinement shall not be exposed to his deceitful practices. Which if true, promises to the Pagan World a great freedom from the miseries and calamities of war. But whatever liberty the Devil may have in other parts, he shall be wholly excluded the Nations walking in the light of the new Jerusalem. To which exclusion will be consequent a great encrease of Peace, Truth and Piety in the kingdom of Christ.

As for wars and publick quarrels, Satan without question hath a principal Hand in them. The great battel at Armageddon is undertaken at the instigation of unclean Spirits, which go forth unto

the Kings of the Earth, to gather them to the battel of the great day of God Almighty, Rev. 16. 14. And no sooner is the Devil let loose, but we find him at his old Employment, gathering the Nations to battel against the Saints ch. 20. 7, 8. Hence, without contradicting St. James, come Wars and Fightings, Quarrels and Dissensions. For even the lusts and passions of Men, to which the Apostle intitiles them, are excited and enraged by the Devil, the professed enemy to Peace and Unity. Peace as is observed by a learned Man, is the peculiar character of Man, as he is distinguished from Brutes. And the great design of the Gospel is to promote this disposition, and to inspire the World with a Spirit of universal love and Charity. When therefore the Devil shall be under close restraint, and Men left to the Bent of their own inclinations, and the Conduct of Religion, there will doubtless be greater Friendship & Concord in the World both among particular Persons and public Societies. And such a peaceable State the Prophets foretell as the peculiar happiness of the Kingdom of Christ.

Christ. For thus it was prophesied by *Isaiah*, that under his government Men shall beat their Swords into plow-shares, and their Spears into Pruning-hooks ; that Nation shall not lift up Sword against Nation, neither shall they learn War any more. *Isa. 2. 4.* And we meet with the same Prophecy in *Micah* with this addition, *They shall sit every Man under his Vine and under his Fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid.* Chap. 4. 3, 4. Hitherto hath been a perfect Revertie of all this. Men have beat their Plowshares in Swords, and their pruning Hooks into Spears. The Art of War was never more studied. And very frequent interruptions have been given to Mens security by rumors of Wars, and hostile Invasions which hath furnished the *Jews* with a very plausible Objecton against the truth of our Blessed Saviours pretences. But these glorious Prophecies concern the Reign of Christ under the Millennial state, and shall then have their accomplishment. When Satan that grand Incendiary whose busines and delight it is to disturb the peace of mankind, shall be Chained up ; then the Peace of God, and

that Divine grace of peaceableness to which we are called by the preaching of the Gospel, shall more universally bear Rule in the Hearts of Men, and tune the World to a blessed Harmony.

This peace in the state will be attended with peace in the Church, which shall enjoy a happy Calm, free on the one hand from the violences of Persecution, and on the other from the disturbances of false Teachers. The Names of Persecutors are distinguished in story by peculiar Marks and Characters of Infamy. But the grand Persecutor, the Devil, is not so commonly taken notice of. 'Tis certain from Scripture that he is concerned, as Principal, in all the Persecutions that have been raised against the Church of Christ. Thus the Christians of the Church of *Smyrna* who suffered Imprisonment in the cause of Religion, are said to be *cast into Prison by the Devil*, Rev. 2. 20. And ch. 12. 4. We find the red Dragon waiting the delivery of the Starry-crowned Woman with an intention to devour her Child, that is the Devil instigating the Heathen Emperors

Emperors to extinguish and destroy the Apostolic Church, and to suppress Christianity at its First appearance. And when the Woman fled into the Wilderness, the Dragon pursues her, and by the assistance of the Beast with seven Heads and Ten Horns, to whom he committed his Power and authority, makes War with the remnant of her seed that refused to receive the Mark of the Beast, viz, the sincere professors of the Gospel. The inhuman Cruelties exercised by these Persecutors, whether Heathen or Christian or rather Antichristian, shew whose Agents they were, and by what Spirit they were actuated. 'Twas the red Dragon that inspired them with such Bloody and barbarous minds, and prompted them to those outrages and violences so contrary to that kindness and compassion, which is one of the prime and essential inclinations of Mankind. And therefore when this cruel Fiend, who thus depraves the mild Tempers of Men, and inflames their minds to such cruelty and fierceness, shall be confined to the bottomless pit; and human nature left to the conduct of its own inclinations,

ciations, cultivated and improved with the mild and merciful principles of Christian Religion, the Church shall no longer be assaulted with storms of Persecution, but be Blessed with a most profound tranquility. And What thus with great reason is infer'd from the premises, may with greater certainty be deduced from the predictions of the Prophets. For this state of Freedom from Sufferings *Isaiah* Prophesies of. ch. 25. 8. *He will swallow up Death in Victory, and the Lord God will wipe away Tears from off all Faces.* With which agrees St. Johns description of the state of the new Jerusalem. Rev. 21. 4. *God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes; and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrows, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.* Which does not Signifie that Men shall be immortal, and no longer obnoxious to Sicknes- ses and bodily Pains, but only that the Church shall enjoy a happy security from the calamities and sufferings of former times. Secondly, The Peace of the Church is not a little disturbed by the intempe-
rate

rate Zeal of false Teachers. By whom these *Seducers* that divide the Church into Sects and Parties are sent out and employed, we learn from our Saviours explication of the Parable of the Tares, Matt 13. 37, 38, 39. *He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seed are the Children of the Kingdom, but the tares are the Children of the wicked One.* The enemy that sowed them is the Devil. Whence it appears that 'tis the Devil that sows these tares of Heretics and Schismatics that overrun the field of the Church, and infuses into their minds false and corrupt doctrines. And thus that Floud of Arrianism that well nigh overwhelmed the Primitive Church is said to have proceeded out of the mouth of the old Serpent, Rev. 12. 15. And the Corruption of the Christian faith in the latter times is attributed to the Devil by the Apostle, Tim. 4. 1. In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits and doctrines of Devils, that is doctrines Suggested by Evil Spirits. So that when the Devil shall be restrained from sowing his tares,

tares, and corrupting the minds of Men with false notions of things ; there will doubtless follow greater consent in matters of Religion, Truth will prevail and Flourish, and bear down all opposite Errors, which will find no patrons to maintain and propagate them. This Conclusion is grounded not only on reason, but Prophecy. For this *Zechary* prophesied should come to pass in the days of the Messias.
ch. 13. 2. *It shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the Idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembred : And also I will cause the prophets, viz, that speak lies, and the unclean Spirit to pass out of the Land.*
Satan hath had his Ministers, false Teachers, in every age of the Church, but the time will come when these lying Prophets shall cease and be removed out of it. *They shall have no place in the new Jerusalem.*
For out of it shall be excluded them that make a lie. Rev. 21. 27. And such are false Apostles, those deceitful workers that transform themselves into the Apostles of Christ, and with fair speeches deceive the Hearts of the Simple.

II. A great encrease of Piety will follow this confinement of Satan. The design of the Gospel is to restrain Men from all impiety, and to oblige them to the practice of universal goodness. And considering the nature of the laws the Gospel prescribes, their agreeableness to the best reason of mankind, and their tendency to promote both our eternal and temporal happiness, 'tis strange Mens actions are not more conformable to them. It is true human nature by the Fall of our first Parents is very much corrupted, and tainted with evil Inclinations. And this inbred Corruption doth at once indispose us to Goodness, and betray us to many sinful practices agreeable to our depraved appetites. But I cannot think Men would arrive at such heights of wickedness and villainy as we see many do, unless they were pusht forward by the Instigation of some wicked Spirits, who as the Scripture tells us work in, act and inspire the Children of disobedience, great and notorious Sinners over whom they have a more immediate influence

fluence and power. Eph. 2. 2. Nor is the Devil wanting to insnare and allure even good Men into forbidden courses. Hence he hath the title of the Tempter, because he makes it his great business and employment to seduce Men to Sin. So that the greatest part of the wickedness that is committed in the World is owing to the Temptations of evil Spirits, who by presenting to Men the opportunities and occasions of sin, and infusing into them evil motions excite and aquate that Corruption which is inherent in our nature. When therefore the Devil shall be shut up in the Abyss, and restrained from tempting Men, without doubt immorality and wickedness will decline, and there will be a general and more exact conformity to the dictates of Reason and the laws of Religion. And this flourishing state of Religion is clear from express texts of Scripture. For thus Righteousness is said to dwell in the new Heavens and new Earth 2 Pet. 3. 13. And St. John saith that nothing that defileth shall enter into the new Jerusalem. Rev. 21.

27. Which plainly signifies a great increase of Piety and Virtue in the Millennial State of the Church.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

Of the Resurrection and Reign of
the Saints.

I saw Thrones and they sat upon them; and judgment was given unto them; And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast neither his Image, neither had received his Mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a Thousand years. Rev 20. 4. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first Resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first Resurrection; On such the second Death hath no power. ver. 5. 6. Here are two things to be considered. 1 The judgment given to them that sat on Thrones. 2 The Living of the Beheaded and their reigning with Christ, The meaning of the First is clear from a parallel

el place *Dan.* 7. 22. Judgment was given to the Saints of the most High. That both the One and the Other belong to the same thing is evident, because they begin from the same Term, viz, the destruction of the fourth Beast, That in *Daniel*, when the Beast (then ruling in the wicked Horn) was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame, ver 11, 21, 23. This in the *Apocalypse*, when the Beast and the false Prophet (the wicked Horn in *Daniel*) were taken and both cast alive into a lake of Fire burning with Brimstone, *Rev.* 19. 20, 21, &c. vid *Mede Ep.* 15, They therefore whom St. John saw sitting on Thrones are the Saints of the most High, that is the Jews, the holy People as they are called *Dan.* 8. 24. 12. 7. And to them Judgment was given i. e. Dominion or Empire. For so it follows in the place even now, cited, *The Saints possessed the Kingdom*, ch. 7. 22. When the Course of the four Monarchies is finished by the destruction of the Fourth Beast, the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. And from thenceforth the Kingdom and Dominion and

and greatness of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven shall be given to the People of the Saints of the most High, Daniel 7. 27. And thus of the new Jerusalem it is said, That the Kings of the Earth do bring their Glory and Honour into it Rev. 21. 24. Of this see a more full and particular account in the fourth chapter.

As for the other part of this vision, I find no Key to it in the Prophets. Indeed whereof I think it safest to attend to the plain literal sense of the words. And if it be interpreted by this Rule, the thing signified must be the Resurrection and Reign of the Martyrs.

The Resurrection of the dead is a fundamental Article of Christian Faith, built on clear and express texts of Scripture. But in what order the dead shall be raised is no where expressly declared. This only we learn from St. Paul that the Good and the Wicked shall not arise at the same Instant, but that the Righteous will have the Precedency. Cor. 15. 23. Every

Men in his own order. Christ the first Fruiss, afterward they that are Christs, at his Coming. Agreeable to this is that of the same Apostle 1 Thes 4. 13. The Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the Arch-angel and with the Trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Now a Resurrection of the Martyrs prior to the general Resurrection is very consistent with these assertions of the Apostle, which do not deny the Resurrection of some particular Persons before the Coming of Christ to judgment, but only declare that Such of the Righteous whom Christ at his coming shall find in the state of the dead shall have the Precedency of the wicked, and be first restored to life. St. Matthew tells us, that at our Saviours Resurrection the graves were opened, and many Bodies of Saints which slept arose and went into the holy City, and appeared unto many. ch 27. 52, 53. And why may not the Privilege of a more early Resurrection be indulged the Martyrs in recompence of their Sufferings? The invincible Courage and Resolution of the Primitive

mitive Christians proceeded in a great measure from the hope and expectation of it. And perhaps the Revelation of such a distinguishing Favour was designed on purpose for the encouragement and support of their Constancy under those Persecutions wherewith God thought fit to exercise the Faith and Patience of the first Christians.

That the Martyrs after their Resurrection shall Reign on Earth is an opinion which hath no countenance from Scripture. All St. John here saith is, *that the Beheaded lived again and reigned with Christ a Thousand years*, which does not at all favour this Conceit, but rather supposes the contrary. The Dominion Christ was invested with at his Ascension, he is to possess to the end of the World. There is no new Kingdom to be erected for him upon Earth, nor will he descend from Heaven where he now reigns until the time appointed by God for the judgment of the World. Then he will arise from his Imperial Seat at his Fathers right Hand, and come down into these lower Regions

Regions in order to the holding his general Assizes. And this is the Concluding act, and will put an end to his glorious Reign. Now if the Martyrs shall be admitted to a participation of Christs Kingdom, where should they reign but in Heaven, where Christs Throne is, where he reigns in Person and from whence he administers all the affairs of the World. There is nothing of Paradox in this Supposition to them who believe the Principles and Doctrines of Christianity, which teach that the bodies of good Men being raised out of the dust, and fashioned like unto Christs glorious Body, shall be translated from this Earth to the Mansions prepared for them in the Heavens. And So far is this Hypothesis of the Millennial Reign from contradicting any text of Scripture, that it seems to have a good foundation in it.

I One principal act of Regality is the power of judging. Now St. Paul tells us *that the Saines shall judge the world* *1 Cor. 6. 2.* Which to be understood of the last and final judgment the following.

lowing verse does clearly evince. Know ye not that we shall judge Angels? That is, such of them as for their Rebellion against God were condemn'd to Hell, and are referred in Chains unto the Judgment of the great day, Jude ver. 6. Which is the only judgment to which they are destined. The judgment therefore of the World by the *Saints* is no other than that at the last day. But who are the *Saints* to whom this authority and power is committed? Not the Righteous in general, for they as well as the wicked must appear before the judgment seat is Christ to give an account of their actions. But perhaps when their Trial is finished, and the Sentence of Absolution pronounced, they shall be translated into the Air, and being placed on Thrones around the Tribunal of Christ, shall bear a part as Assessors in the ensuing judgment of Devils and wicked men. But our Saviours description of the Process of the last judgment intimates the contrary. For the sheep and the goats receive their different Sentences, whilst they are standing the one at the Right, the other on the left

Q. doctri. and moral exhib. in Hand

Hand of the Judge. Matt 25.34. Then shall the King say unto them on his right Hand Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World, But to them on the left Depart ye Cursed into everlasting Fire. ver, 41. Whence it appears that the Assumption of the Righteous into the Clouds of Heaven 1 Thes. 4.17. must Succeed the trial of the wicked, and consequently they cannot be concerned in judging them. The Saints therefore by whom the World of the ungodly shall be judged, and in all probability the Martyrs who reigning with Christ in his Kingdom, will joya with him in the exercise of his judiciary authority, and give their suffrages to the Sentence which he will pass upon the wicked. This Solemnity 'tis true is transacted after the Thousand years allotted for the Martyrs Reign are expired, which seems to exclude them from bearing any part in this Regal act of judging the World. But there is no necessity of concluding their reign with this term, which may very well be extended to the end of Christ's Mediatorial Kingdom. But because the intermediate space from this period to

the final judgment is but short Rev 20. 3. therefore the duration of their Reign is expressed by the complete number of a Thousand years, the odd years that follow not being brought into the account.

2. Besides the glorious Angels, we read of Myriads of *Saints* that accompany Christ in his triumphant progress from Heaven, Jude, ver 14. 1 Thes. 3. 13. To understand this of Angels is without reason to depart from the letter of Scripture against the generally received rule of Interpretation. But to apply it to the Souls of just Men is much more absurd. For these are disposed in Paradise or *Abrahams Bosom* till the Resurrection. Then being reunited to their Bodies they appear before the judgment Seat of Christ, and being finally absolved attend the judge in his return to Heaven. And are now first of all admitted into the immediate presence of God, where there is fulness of joy and perfection of happiness. To send good Men directly to Heaven when they die, and to fetch them from thence at the last day to be judged, that after judgment

ment they may return to their former happy seats with the greater Solemnity, is such an odd preposterous method of proceeding as no considering Man will easily admit, much less believe agreeable to the infinite wisdom of Almighty God. Whereas if a first and particular Resurrection be supposed, a good account may be given of the forementioned texts. For then the *saints* that come with Christ will be those holy Persons who for their constancy in Suffering Death for the sake of God, were Honoured with the peculiar favour of a more early admission into the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus this opinion of the Millennial Reign of the Martyrs is not without some fair appearance of probability, and is very agreeable to the Gospel Oeconomy.

If a figurative Interpretation were to be admitted, the Living of the Beheaded and their reigning with Christ a Thousand years would signify the Rising of the Church from a dead estate, and its enjoyment of peace and tranquility, to which fence most, that I meet with, incline, But

this notion of a Metaphorical Resurrection is encumbered with several difficulties which I cannot overcome. For First, every one that hath part in this first Resurrection is pronounced Blessed and holy and secure from the Power of the second Death, that is, the miseries of the other World. But shall every member of the Church in the Millennial State be eternally blessed? Secondly, The state of the Church before the Millennium shall be very quiet and peaceable in reference to oppression and persecution. For the Beasts Power of making war with the *Saints* is contemporary with the mournful Prophecy of the two Witnesses, which ends with the sixth Trumpet.* And the last act of hostility committed by the Beast will be the slaughter of the witnesses, who revive and are exalted on high before the seventh Angel sounded. Rev. 11.11, 12. And from that time to the final destruction of the Beast under the seventh Vial, the Saints will live secure from the violence of Persecution. To understand therefore the first Resurrection of the rising of the Church from an oppressed and persecuted state,

state is not agreeable to the condition of the times immediately preceding. These and some other reasons prevail with me, to reject this opinion, and to interpret this vision according to the proper meaning of the words,

C 4 CHAP.

to nothing; but with such a state of
riot too, when all upright
men are laid low, and the
whole world is given up to sin.

CHAP. III.

Of the New Heaven and the New Earth.

AND I saw a New Heaven and a
New Earth, for the first Heaven
and the first Earth were passed away, and
there was no more Sea, Rev. 21. 1. The
Vision of a New World immediatly fol-
lowing that of the general Judgment,
seems to signifie the Production of a
new and more glorious Earth, after the
Destruction of the old by fire, for the
Seat and Habitation of the Blessed. But
this is a Mystery past my understand-
ing. All that is signified by it is a
more flourishing and prosperous State of
things. In the Prophetick Style great
Changes are expressed by a New Hea-
ven and a New Earth, which in the
Language of the Hebrews signifies a new
World, and was used by them according
to the present Notion of it among us.

to denote a new Face and Condition of Things. This new Creation God foretold by the Prophet *Isaiah* Chap. 65. 17. Behold I create new Heavens and a new Earth, and the former shall not be remembred, nor come into mind. What follows in that Chapter does unfold the meaning of this Creation. Be you glad and rejoice in that which I create, for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her People a joy, ver. 18. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in my People, and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying, ver. 19. They shall build Houses and inhabit them, and they shall plant Vineyards, and eat the fruit of them, ver. 21. The Wolf and the Lamb shall feed together, and the Lion shall eat Straw like the Bullock, and Dust shall be the Serpents Meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my Holy Mountain, saith the Lord, ver. 25. This Mountain is the Church or Kingdom of Christ, Isa. 33. And the joyful, secure, and peaceable condition of it, is that New Heaven and Earth which God promises to create. This new World, this happy State
of

of the Church hath not yet been seen. Nevertheless we according to this promise look for New Heavens and a New Earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, 2 Peter 3. 13. In the fore-going Verses St. Peter speaks of the melting of the Elements, of the burning of the Earth, and the Dissolution of all things. And then it follows, nevertheless we according to his Promise look for New Heavens and a New Earth. Whence some have concluded that this New World must succeed the Conflagration, which is a great mistake. For St. Peter's New Heaven and Earth is no other than that promised, *Isaiah 65. 17.* And the New World in *Isaiah* doth clearly belong to the Kingdom of Christ, which must conclude with the Resurrection and last Judgment, *I Corinth. 15. 25, 26, 28.* He must Reign till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet. The last Enemy that shall be destroyed is Death. And when all things shall be subdued unto him then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. If therefore the

the New Heaven and New Earth must be before the Conclusion and Surrender of Christ's Kingdom, then must it of necessity be before the Conflagration of the World, which will not begin, 'till the Judgment is concluded. And though there are no certain Characters in the Revelation, by which the precise time of this Vision may be found out ; yet from that place in *Isaiah* it may be concluded to belong to the Kingdom of Christ, and particularly to the last Scene of it under the *Millennium*, when the State of Things will be vastly different from what they are or have hitherto been, as has been fully proved in the first Chapter. And so great will be the prosperity of the Millennial State, that there will be no longer need of Ships for War or Foreign Commerce and Traffick, which the present condition of things requires, which I take to be the meaning of what is added by St. John, and *there was no more sea.*

CHAP. IV.

Of the new Jerusalem.

And I John saw the holy City, the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband. And I heard a great voice out of Heaven, saying, behold the Tabernacle of God is with Men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His People, and God himself shall be with them and be their God. Rev 21. 2, 3. Concerning the New Jerusalem here are three things to be inquired. What is meant, 1 By the New Jerusalem. 2 By its coming down from Heaven. 3. By the walking of the Nations in the light of it, ver. 21. These I take to be the most material Points; the resolution whereof will give us a clear understanding of this Mystery.

I. By the New Jerusalem or the Lamb's wife ver, 9, 10. Is meant the People of the

the Jews converted to the Faith of Christ. Upon the ruin of Babylon, the Elders rejoice for the approaching solemnity of the Lambs Marriage. Rev. 19. 7. *Let us be glad and rejoice for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made her self ready.* Now the fall of Babylon and destruction of the seven-headed Beast, or Roman Empire, is the very point of time prefixt for the Conversion and Restoration of the Jewish Nation, That their blindness and infidelity shall then be removed, we learn from St. Paul Rom. 11. 25. *I would not that ye should be ignorant of this Mystery, that blindness in part is happen'd to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, And so all Israel shall be saved.* This coming in of the fulness of the Gentiles, is of the same Import and Significancy, with the fulfilling the times of the Gentiles, which puts an end to the Miseries and dispersions of the Jews. Luk. 21. 24. *And they shall fall by the Edge of the Sword, and shall be lead away captive into all Nations, and Jerusalem shall be troden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.* The times of the Gentiles

are the times of the four Monarchies, wherein the Gentiles have dominion. And when the time of the fourth and last monarchy is expired and accomplished, the Jews will every where embrace the Christian Religion, and be restored to their ancient Countrey from which they have so long been banished. Now if the Restitution of the Jewish Nation, and the Marriage of the Lamb are co-incident and happen at the same time, what can we imagine the New Jerusalem, the Bride, the Lambs Wife to be, but the Jews, once Gods peculiar people, to whom after so long a divorce he will be graciously reconciled, and receive them again into favour. The greatness of the happiness they will enjoy in their native Land, is here represented by a most splendid and magnificent City, whose foundations are garnished with all manner of precious stones ver.

19. Which had no need of the Sun or Moon to shine upon it, being enlightened by the Glory of God, ver. 23. By a Chrystal River of Water of life proceeding from the Throne of God and of the Lamb. Chap.

22. 1. And lastly by the Tree of life bearing

bearing twelve manner of Fruits, yielding her Fruits every Month verl. 2. All which is nothing but a Rhetorical description of the flourishing state of the Jews after their return from Captivity. Which kind of descriptions were familiar to the Jews, and very frequently occur in Prophetic writings see. Isa. 54. 11, 12. 65. 19. Tob. 13. 16, 17.

11. By the descending of the New Jerusalem from God out of Heaven, I understand the Restitution of the Jews by the immediate Power of God. That Jesus is the Christ is demonstratively evident from their own Books, the Writings of the old Testament. And yet in defiance of the most solid reasoning and discourse they have obstinately persisted in their unbelief near seventeen hundred years. So that their Infidelity seems incurable by any human Methods of Conviction. But that which to Men is impossible, is possible to God, who by the Power of his grace can reduce the most perverse and incorrigible Sinners. How wonderfully and Suddenly was St. Paul converted

converted, who of a bitter and virulent Persecutor of Christians became a most active and zealous Preacher of the Gospel? Whether the Conversion of the Jews shall be wrought after the same manner viz, by a vision and voice from Heaven, I cannot tell. But whatever may be the external and visible means, the Spirit of God will be the Principal Agent in this business. Who by the internal Illumination of their minds, with the light of Heavenly truth, will Scatter the clouds and mists of prejudice, and convince them of their Error and wickedness in rejecting the Holy Jesus. This their repentance *Isaiah* speaks of Chap. 59. 20. Which is much clearer from St. Paul's application of this Prophecy, Rom 11. 26, 27.
There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my Covenant with them, when I shall take away their Sins. With this agrees that of Zechary. *In that day I will pour upon the house of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of Grace and Supplication, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall*

Shall Mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only Son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born Chap. 12. 10. And the same Divine Power that worketh this inward change in the Jews, will incline the Hearts of the several Princes in whose Countries they are dispersed to give them liberty of returning to the land of Canaan, and to furnish them with all things needful. Surely the Isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy Sons from far, their Silver and their Gold with them. Isa 60. 9. Some are of Opinion that their Captivity shall be perpetual. But besides that the above-mentioned text Luke 21. 24. Which speaks of the dispersion of the Jews, and the desolation of Jerusalem, Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfill'd, implies the contrary. There are several Prophecies that foretell their return. Particularly that of Amos Chap. 9. 14, 15. And I will bring again the Captivity of my People Israel, and they shall build the waste Cities and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens

desire and eat the Fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their own land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them saith the Lord. The perpetuity of the Settlement here spoken of shews that it is to come, and cannot belong to their reestablishment after the return from Babylon, which was not of much above five hundred years continuance. But no where is the present Captivity and future return of the Jews so clearly Prophesied of as in the Book of Tobit Chap. 14: 4, 5. Our Brethren shall lie scattered in the Earth from that good land, and Jerusalem shall be desolate, and the House of God in it shall be burned, and shall be desolate for a time: And again God will have mercy on them, and bring them again into the land where they shall build a Temple, but not like to the first εἰδώλων καὶ τὸ οὐρανόν, till the seasons of the age be fulfilled, which signifies the continuance of the second Temple till the dissolution of the Jewish Polity. And again they shall go into a long and great Captivity viz. the present, which words are wanting in the Greek and English bibles.

lish Versions, but are in the Hebrew Copy set out by Paulus Fagius, and afterwards they shall return from all places of their Captivity, and build up Jerusalem gloriously, and the House of God shall be built in it for ever with a glorious building, as the Prophets have spoken thereof.

III. The fame of the Jews return being spread over the World, Christian Princes pour in their treasures into the Holy Land, and contribute their assistances towards the rebuilding Jerusalem and the rest of the waste and desolate Cities. The Nations of them that are saved, shall walk in the light of the New Jerusalem, and the Kings of the Earth do bring their Glory and Honour into it Rev 21. 24. Upon the return from Babylon, the building of the Temple and City met with great opposition and obstructions from the envy and malice of the adversaries of Judah. But now there will be no Rehums or Sanballats to obstruct their proceedings, the work will be vigorously carried on by the united forces and joint endeavours of Jews

and Gentiles. This assistance of the Gentiles *Isaiah* speaks of Chap. 60. 10, 11. *The Sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their Kings shall minister unto thee; for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.* Therefore thy Gates shall be open continually, they shall not be shut day nor night, that Men may bring unto thee the forces or wealth of the Gentiles, And again Chap. 61. 4, 5, 6. They shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste Cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your Flocks and the Sons of the Alien shall be your Plowmen and your Vine-dressers. But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord; Men shall call you the Ministers of our God; ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their Glory shall you boast your selves. But their greatest Glory will be the profession and establishment of true Christian Religion among them, with the knowledge whereof God will wonderfully enlighten their minds, for a Pattern to all the Gentile Nations professing Christianity, who shall now conform to the Standard

Standard of the Jewish Church. And this I take to be the meaning of the Nations walking in the light of the New Jerusalem, and to be the full accomplishment of these words in *Isaiah*, *the Gentiles shall come to thy light and Kings to the brightness of thy rising Chap. 60. 3.*

D 3 CHAP.

C H A P. V.

*Of Gog and Magog's attempt against the
Camp of the Saints.*

THE Jews being replanted in the promised land, shall enjoy an uninterrupted course of prosperity for several ages. But when the Thousand years of Saints confinement are expired, he shall be loosed out of his Prison. And shall go out to deceive the Nations which are in the four Quarters of the Earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battel, the number of whom is as the Sand of the Sea. Rev 20. 7, 8. At whose instigation, They went up, saith St. John, on the breadth of the Earth, and compassed the Camp of the Saints about, and the beloved City. But this attempt ended in the total overthrow and destruction of that numerous Army. For fire came down from God out of Heaven, and devoured them vers. 9. A terrible Expedition this, and no less astonishing than

than the issue. And that which increases the Wonder is the common opinion concerning the Amplitude of Christ's Kingdom, which long ere this may be presumed to be arrived at its full extent. For if all the Nations under Heaven have of a long time received and professed the faith of Christ, as this opinion supposes 'tis very strange that such a prodigious number of Christians from the four Quarters of the Earth, should all on a sudden conspire to invade *Judea* and to destroy the *Jews*, professing the same Religion, and whom their late reestablishment proclaims to be in a more peculiar manner the favourites of Heaven,

The present limits of the Church no doubt will be greatly enlarged by the accession of many Nations now sitting in darkness and the shadow of Death. And this enlargement (whatever increase it may receive in the mean time, of which there is little prospect) may reasonably be expected at the time of the *Jews* Conversion, from which no less than from their Infidelity the Gentile world will receive great

great advantages. If the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness, Rom. 11, 12. That is upon the coming in of the body of the Jewish Nation to the Church of Christ, the Gospel will be farther propagated among the Gentiles, which is all that can be concluded from that Text. 'Tis true there are several places of Scripture which seem to extend the Kingdom of Christ over all Nations of the Earth, and to foretell the reception of the Gospel by all People in all places of the World. Thus it is foretold of Christ, that there should be given him Dominion and Glory and a Kingdom, that all People, Nations and Languages should serve him, and that all Dominions should serve and obey him, Dan. 7. 14, 27. And thus of the stone cut out without Hands, by which all agree is meant the Kingdom of Christ, it is said that it became a great mountain and filled the whole Earth Dan. 2. 34, 35. But these and the like Prophecies signify no more than the vast extent and largeness of the Christian Church

Church in opposition to the straitness of the Church of the *Jews* which was confined within the narrow limits of a small Countrey. That these notes of Universality All, Whole, are to be interpreted in a limited and restrained sense, is evident from other Prophecies in this Book of *Daniel* concerning the extent of the Grecian and Roman Empires. For thus it is foretold of the *third Kingdom* that *is shoule bear Rule over all the Earth* Chap. 2. 39. And of the *fourth Kingdom*, that *is shoule devour the whole Earth*. Dan. 7. 23. And yet neither the Greeks nor Romans could pretend to an universal Conquest of the whole World. There were several Nations never visited by the Roman Eagle, and where the Name of *Alexander* was never heard of, although 'tis said he was so vain as to weep for want of more Worlds to conquer. And thus a great part of the World will never be actually subject to Christ, nor under the government of his laws. For as the Greeks and Romans bearing Rule over and devouring all the Earth, signifies no more than the greatness of their Conquests and the largeness

largeness of their Dominions: So by the obedience of all Nations to Christ, and his Kingdoms filling the whole Earth, can be meant no more than the worship and acknowledgment of Christ by the greater part of the World. And it is observable that *Isaiah* Prophesying of the establishment of the Mountain of the Lord's House on the top of the Mountains, and the exaltation of it above the Hills, and the Confluence of all Nations unto it Chap. 2. 2. In the next verse the universal is changed into a particular proposition. *And many People shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob,* Intimating the reception of the Gospel by a great part of mankind, and the continuance of the rest of the World in the state of Heathenism. And now the wonder of this Invasion ceases. For 'tis easy to imagine the Camp of the Saints encompassed by an army of Infidels excited or provoked thereto by the Devil. But there is some difficulty in conceiving how this army should be drawn together from so remote and distant places of the World.

For

For the Nations of which it is composed are said to be in the four Quarters of the Earth. But it hath been observed by a learned Man, that *yn* in many places of the New Testament hath a Critical signification, and does peculiarly refer to the Land of *Judea*. And in this notion it is here to be understood, as signifying not the whole World, but that Part or Portion of it, which by God was given to the Posterity of *Abraham*, and which is here distinguished by a new Name, the Camp of the Saints, in allusion to their incamping in the Wilderness. And then the Nations in the four Quarters or corners of the Land will be some people seated in the Countries not far distant from *Judea*, whom we may easily conceive entering into a Confederacy against the Jews, and uniting their forces for the destruction of these Saints of the most High. And thus the greatest difficulties relating to this vision are removed. And the plain meaning and signification of it appears to be the Invasion of *Judea* by some of the neighbouring Nations. Which event if it were foretold by the Prophets, there can

can be no reason to question or doubt of the truth of this Exposition. Now concerning this Invasion there are several Prophecies, but the most remarkable and express is that in *Ezekiel*, between which and this vision there is an exact and admirable agreement.

Ezekiel's Prophecy, St. John's Vision,
Chap. 30. Rev. 20, &c.

“ In the latter
“ days thou, viz. Gog
“ shalt come into
“ the Land that is
“ brought back from
“ the Sword, and
“ is gathered out of
“ many People, a-
“ gainst the Moun-
“ tains of Israel. In-
“ vasurus montes Is-
“ raelis, Junius, ver.
“ 8. Thou shalt as-
“ cend and come
“ like a Storm, thou

“ And when the
“ Thousand Years
“ are expired, Satan
“ shall be loosed out
“ of his Prison ver.
“ 7. And shall go
“ out to deceive
“ the Nations, Gog
“ and Magog to ga-
“ ther them toge-
“ ther to Battel the
“ number of whom
“ is as the Sand of
“ the Sea, verse 8.
“ And they went up
“ and

" shalt be like a
" Cloud to cover
" the Land, thou
" and all thy Bands
" and many People
" with thee, ver. 9.

" And it shall come
" to pass at the
" same time, when
" Gog shall come a-
" gainst the Land
" of *Israel*, saith the
" Lord God, that
" my Fury shall
" come up in my
" Face. And I will
" plead against him
" with Pestilence
" and with Blood,
" and I will Rain
" upon him and his
" Bands, and upon
" the many People
" that are with
" him, an over-
" flowing Rain, and
" great Hail-stones,

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bas

" and compassed a-
" bout the Camp
" of the Saints, and
" the beloved City,
" vers. 9.

" And Fire came
" down from God
" out

"Fire, and Brimstone, and
"stone, ver. 18, "out of Heaven
"22. " & devoured them
"vers. 9.

And whereas it is objected that *Gog* in *Ezekiel* comes out of the North parts
vers. 15. whereas *Gog* and *Magog* in the
Revelation are laid to be Nations which
are in the four Quarters of the Earth, this
seeming difference admits of an easy Solu-
tion. For although *Gog* with the People
of *Magog* came out of the North parts, yet
the rest of the people of which his army
consists, come from other parts. Some
from *Persia*, some from *Ethiopia* and *Lybia*,
and others from the North Quarters of
the lesser *Asia*, viz. *Gomer* and *Togarmah*
vers. 5, 6. So that here are several Na-
tions in Confederacy against the Jews,
and these lying against the four Corners
of their Land. But whereas God and *Ma-*
gog are chief in this Expedition, therefore
they only are mentioned by St. John. And
for the same Reason, the judgment of God
against this Army is in *Ezekiel* denoun-
ced particularly against *Gog*. So that here
is no difference but a most exact harmony
and

and consent between the Prophets and the Divine.

But there is a farther Correspondence as to the time of this Invasion very remarkable, and which abundantly confirms my Interpretation. This in the *Revelation* is about a Thousand years after the Jews Conversion, and repossession of their native Land. And that in *Ezekiel* succeeds the Restauration of the Jewish Nation and their Subjection to Christ. For in the seven and thirtieth Chapter is foretold the Return of the whole House of Israel, vers. 11, 12. The Reunion of the two Kingdoms after this Return, vers. 21, 22. And the perpetual government of David or Christ over them vers. 25. And then follows in the next Chapter, the Prophecy of Gogs invading the people of Israel in the latter days or towards the End of the World Chap. 38. 16.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the general judgment and end of
the World.

THE last vision is that of the general Judgment which is the concluding Scene, and ends with the Conflagration of the World. *And I saw a great white Throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the Earth and the Heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the Books were opened, and another Book was opened which is the Book of Life, and the Dead were judged out of those things which were written in the Books according to their works. And the Sea gave up the Dead which were in it, and Death and Hell delivered up the Dead which were in them: And they were judged every Man according to his works. And Death and Hell were cast into the lake of fire: this is the second Death. And whosoever was not found*
written

written in the Book of Life, was cast into the lake of Fire. Rev 20. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. What St. John here saith of the dead standing before the Throne of God, and their being judged according to their works, needs not much explication. The right of judging belongs to none but God, nor is any besides a God qualified for so mighty a performance. But we are assured from Scripture that this judgment shall be administered by God Incarnate in the Person of Jesus Christ who is ordained the Judge of quick and Dead, Act 10. 42. For the Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, and that for this reason as Our Saviour himself tells us, because he is the Son of Man, that is truly and really Man as well as God, John 5. 27. For of the three Persons in the Blessed Trinity, the Son only is personally united to Human nature. And therefore being God-man is the most proper Judge of Men who must be judged in their Bodies.

The consequents of this judgment are

E

not

not so clear and obvious. For as for the casting Death and Hell into the lake of Fire, with all whose names are not found Written in the Book of Life; and the flying away of the Earth and the Heaven from the face of him that sits on the Throne; these are somewhat obscure expressions, and not so easily understood,

I. St. Paul tells us that *the last Enemy that shall be destroyed is Death* 1 Cor. 15. 26. Which destruction is here expressed by casting Death and Hell or *Hades* the place of separate Souls into the lake of Fire. And signifies that there shall be no more separation of Soul and Body, but that Men arise to an immortal and endless Life. But whether this immortality and endless duration be common to all Men, or peculiar only to the Blessed is made matter of dispute. That good Men shall live for ever in a State of unsurpassable happiness, is a privilege beyond the merit of the most perfect virtue. But eternal Life is a gift very becoming the infinite Goodness of God to bestow. And no Man ever Quarrel'd with God on this Score,

Score, for promising to reward the imperfect Services of Men with Eternal Happiness. But by some it is thought very hard, and no way consonant with the Laws of Justice, to punish the sins of a short life with an eternity of torment, than Man who sin but a few years, must live for ever in insupportable misery, there being no proportion between Time and Eternity. This indeed is a very great difficulty, and hath infested some Men so pert a period to the miseries of the Damned, as not knowing how to reconcile the Divine Justice to the Eternity of Hell Torment.

Whatever is necessary for the preservation of Government, and securing obedience to laws, must be allowed to be just and lawful, Which justifies the severity of God in denouncing everlasting misery against impenitent sinners, because nothing less would be a sufficient restraint upon most Men from breaking the Laws of God. For if the generality of Men despaired these Terrors of the Lord: what reward would they have for menaces less severe?

severe? But that God should execute these threats according to the strictest sense of them, there is no necessity. For tho' Promises oblige to a performance, yet Threats do not induce any obligation, nor does justice require the Execution of them. And therefore God, if he pleases, may deal with Sinners more mercifully than he hath threatned. But whether he will shew them favour, and abate any thing of the utmost he has denounced, I cannot tell. This is most certain, that no Man shall suffer beyond the just desert of his actions. But who dare say that God cannot in justice inflict Eternal punishment? For any Man upon such a presumption to harden himself against the clear and express threats of endless Misery, is the height of madness. For if at last the Torments of a future state are Eternal, how sad and deplorable will his Condition be! And if they prove finite and end in his final destruction, yet what an amazing and insupportable thought is this, for a Man to suffer the pains of Hell so long as the Divine justice can inflict them, and at last with all sense of farther sufferings

to lose his Being for ever. This indeed is the mildest fate the Sinner can expect, but a much more severe may be his doom.

II. This punishment of wicked Men is express by being cast into the lake of Fire. Which some interpret, according to the literal sense, of Torment by real fire. Others understand this to be a Metaphorical description of the unknown miseries of the Damned. The truth seems divided between these two opinions. For first, it is clear from St. Peter, that the Heavens and the Earth which are now, are reserved unto fire against the day of judgment. 2 Ep. 3. 7.. And whatever operation this fire may have upon the Apostate Spirits, it will doubtless affect the bodies of wicked Men with most painful impressions.

But secondly, This seems only the Prologue to a more tragical state which they must enter upon when this Congregation is ended, and of which a lake of fire and Brimstone is only a representation

tation. The miseries of Hell are described in Scripture by the most sensible and painful things. And because the most dreadful Idea of pain the mind can form, is the suffering by a raging and devouring fire, therefore this Metaphor of fire is most frequently used. And as for the lake of Fire and Brimstone so often mentioned in the Revelation, it relates to the lake *Asphalites* or the Dead Sea, the lasting Monument of those showers of Fire and Brimstone wherewith the Cities of *Sodoma* and *Gomorrha* were consumed. These and the like descriptions are lively Images and Representations of Hell Torments, and signify them to be intolerable great, but they do not express the true nature of them. This indeed is in a great measure unknown to us, and the most affrighted imagination cannot reach the truth and terror of them. For who can tell or conceive what evils and Miseries the wrath of God and his vengeance on the ungodly comprehends. By the Earth and the Heavens flying

flying away from the face of him that sits on the Throne, I understand the destruction of their present frame. I see no reason from this or any other place of Scripture to conclude the utter Abolition or Annihilation of the World. The matter and Substance of the Earth and the rest of the Mosaic Creation will doubtless continue the same, but they will receive a new form, or rather be ~~indigeste~~ ^{reduced to} ~~stage~~ ^{to} ~~notes~~ ^{small} heap without form or order. This Dissolution of things St. Peter speaks of, and tells us that this wonderful Metamorphosis shall be effected by Fire, 2 Pet. 3.

Some are apt to fancy that this Conflagration of the World is in order to its refining, and that the Heavens and Earth being purged by Fire, God will erect a new World out of the old Materials for the seat and habitation of the Blessed. But this is a mere imagination, and is directly contrary to Scripture which teaches us, that the Kingdom, which the Righteous must inherit was prepared for them from the foundation of the world. E 4

the World Matt. 25. 42. And as for the New Heavens and the New Earth which St. John and St. Peter speak of, I have shewed that they do not signify the Creation of a New World after the day of Judgment, but a New state of things in the old.

Others think this Conflagration to be perpetual, and to be designed for the punishment of the wicked who shall live and suffer in this Fire to Eternal Ages. This seems to have some foundation in Scripture, which speaks of the condemnation of the wicked to everlasting Fire. But this fire to which wicked Men will be condemned, is the same with that prepared for the Devil and his Angels, which cannot be a Real One. For the evil Angels are spiritual Substances, and have no sense of Material Impressions. If then the punishment of the Devil and wicked Men be of the same kind, the means and instrument of their Torment will not be Fire. And so this opinion of a burning World falls to the ground. The fire therefore at the day of judgment is

is not intended chiefly for the punishment of ungodly Men though they, as I said before, will suffer by it, but for the destruction or dissolution of the World, to which God will then put an end and reduce it to its Primitive Chaos. And this dark, space out of which the Earth and Heaven are fled away, I suppose to be that Blackness of Darkness mentioned by St. Peter and St. Jude and which is said to be reserved for the Damned. For thus of the Angels that kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, St. Jude, saith vers. 6. that God hath reserved them for everlasting Chains, or to be bound in everlasting Chains under Darkness at the Judgment of the great Day, *Vid. Piscator in Loc. Mede Disc. 4.* And the fate of ungodly Men is the same, for to them is likewise reserved the blackness of darkness for ever, vers. 13. And in this melancholy State of Darkness and Horror, the Devil and his Angels, and all whose Names are not found written in the Book of Life shall be tormented, and endure greater Miseries than the mildest fears

fears and jealousies of the most guilty minds can imagine.

*Nisi in hisce talibus liberius paulo
sentiendi, inno & errandi venia
concedatur, ad profunda illa &
latentia veritatis advia via nun-
quam patefacta fuerit. Mede.*

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